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James Donovan Wins CIA Medal

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James B. Donovan, the key American legal figure in the recent Powers-Pryor-Abel spy exchange with the Soviet Union, has been awarded the Distinguished Intelligence Medal of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Mr. Donovan, who lives at 85 Prospect Park West and maintains law offices at 161 William St., Manhattan, is vice president of the Board of Education.

Negotiated Swap.

He negotiated the January swap of American U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers for convicted Soviet spy Col. Rudolf Abel. Included in the agreement with the Russians was the repatriation of Frederic L. Pryor, an American student who had been held by the Communists and charged with espionage.

A citation accompanying the medal mentioned Mr. Donovan's "outstanding achievement in a position of great responsibility."

"Entrusted with the conduct of negotiations at the international level, Mr. Donovan, employing tact, firmness and the highest order of diplomatic skill, succeeded in bringing his mission to a conclusion more satisfactory than initially envisaged," it said.

Wins Kennedy Praise.

"His unique accomplishments represent a contribution of great value to the CIA and to the United States Government."

Mr. Donovan has also received a letter from President Kennedy commending him for the "greatest skill and courage" in conducting the negotiations for the trade.

Another letter of commendation came from Gen. Lucius D. Clay, the President's personal representative in West Berlin.